

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are presented for consideration, with Claim 1 being independent.

Claim 1 has been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art.

The amendments to the Claim 1 were not presented earlier as it was believed that the previously presented claims would be found allowable. This Amendment does not add any additional claims. Moreover, the Examiner's familiarity with the subject matter of the present application will allow an appreciation of the significance of the amendments herein without undue expenditure of time and effort. Finally, the Amendment does not raise new issues requiring a substantial amount of further consideration or search. Accordingly, it is believed that entry of the Amendment is appropriate.

Applicants are filing concurrently herewith a Request for Interview, in which a personal interview is requested prior to the Examiner issuing an Office Action on the merits.

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 2 and 3 are indicated as containing patentable subject matter. These claims remain in dependent form as it is respectfully submitted that parent Claim 1 is patentable in its own right for the reasons discussed below.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over JP '850 in combination with Murata '575 and Piaseinski '520. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as set forth in Claim 1 relates to a method of manufacturing an image display apparatus, with the method including the step of providing a depressurized airtight container, wherein the airtight container comprises a rear plate having a

plurality of electron-emitting devices, a face plate opposing the rear plate and having a phosphor and an electroconductive film, and a plurality of plate-shaped spacers between the rear plate and the face plate. In addition, an electric field is applied between the rear plate and the face plate while the depressurized airtight container is slanted so that a longitudinal direction of the plate-shaped spacers is not perpendicular to a gravitational direction.

As will be appreciated, Claim 1 has been amended to provide a depressurized airtight container. In accordance with the claimed invention, an effective and high quality image display apparatus can be manufactured.

As discussed in the previous Amendment of October 14, 2003, JP 7-105850 relates to the manufacture of a flat image display device in which foreign matter is removed by an electric shock. The Office Action acknowledges that this citation does not teach applying an electric field between the rear plate and the face plate of an airtight container in an image display apparatus in which the airtight container is slanted such that a longitudinal direction of plate-shaped spacers is not perpendicular to the direction of gravity.

The secondary citations to Murata and Piaseinski were cited to compensate for the deficiencies in JP '850. Murata relates to an image display apparatus and was cited for its teaching of plural spacers disposed between line electrons and an electron gun. Piaseinski relates to a cathode-ray tube particle removal apparatus, and is said to suggest orienting a display in such a manner that gravity would assist in the removal of particles.

It is respectfully submitted, however, that in view of the fact that Piascinski dislodges particles from the interior of an apparatus with the use of "thumper mechanisms" for physically striking the part of the apparatus, causing asynchronous vibrations that shake particles loose, and because this dislodging is done prior to assembly of the image display (see column 1, lines 4-19 and column 3, lines 33-36), it would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to use the teachings in Piascinski to modify JP '850 in the manner suggested in the Office Action. Moreover, it is submitted that neither JP '850 nor Murata provide sufficient incentive or motivation to modify the flat image display device in Murata to include spacers. As evident from the figure in JP '850, the disclosed flat image display device includes a front glass vessel that appears to have no need for spacers.

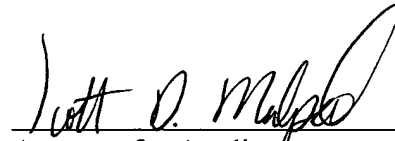
Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1 patentably distinguishes the invention over the cited art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 patentably defines the invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons that the base claim from which they depend is allowable, and further due to the additional features that they recite. Individual consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C.
office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our
below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott D. Malpede", is written over a horizontal line.

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